

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously presented) A method for processing communication traffic that is directed to a group of addresses on a network, comprising:

identifying a subset of the group of the addresses such that the addresses in the subset are expected to receive smaller amounts of the communication traffic than other addresses in the group;

monitoring the communication traffic that is directed to the addresses in the subset;

determining respective baseline characteristics of the communication traffic that is directed to each of the addresses in the subset;

detecting a deviation from the respective baseline characteristics of the communication traffic directed to at least one of the addresses in the subset, wherein the deviation is indicative that at least a portion of the communication traffic is of potentially malicious origin; and

responsively to detecting the deviation, filtering the communication traffic that is directed to all of the addresses in the group so as to remove at least some of the communication traffic that is of the malicious origin.

2-3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the baseline characteristics comprise a distribution of communication protocols used in generating the communication traffic.

5. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the baseline characteristics comprise a distribution of ports to which the communication traffic is directed.

6. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the baseline characteristics comprise a distribution of source addresses of the communication traffic.

7. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the baseline characteristics comprise a distribution of sizes of data packets sent to the addresses in the group.

8. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the baseline characteristics are indicative of a distribution of operating systems running on computers that have transmitted the communication traffic.

9. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 8, wherein detecting the deviation comprises reading a Time-To-Live (TTL) field in Internet Protocol headers of data packets sent to the addresses in the group, and detecting a change in values of the TTL field relative to the baseline characteristics.

10. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein detecting the deviation comprises detecting events that are indicative of a failure in communication between a first computer at one of the addresses in the group and a second computer at another location in the network.

11. (Original) The method according to claim 10, wherein detecting the events comprises detecting failures to establish a Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) connection.

12. (Original) The method according to claim 1, and comprising receiving packets that are indicative of a communication failure in the network that is characteristic of a worm infection, and wherein filtering the communication traffic comprises deciding to filter the communication traffic responsively to receiving the packets.

13. (Original) The method according to claim 12, wherein receiving the packets comprises receiving Internet Control Message Protocol (ICMP) unreachable packets.

14. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein monitoring the communication traffic comprises making a determination that one or more packets transmitted over the network are ill-formed, and wherein filtering the communication traffic comprises deciding to filter the communication traffic responsively to the ill-formed packets.

15. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein detecting the deviation comprises incrementing a count of events that are indicative of the malicious origin of the communication traffic, and deciding whether to filter the communication traffic responsively to the count.

16. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 15, wherein detecting the deviation comprises receiving data packets of potentially malicious origin, each data packet having a respective source address and destination address, and wherein incrementing the count comprises determining an amount by which to increment the count responsively to a given data packet depending upon whether among the data packets received previously, responsively to which the count was incremented, at least one data packet had the same respective source address and at least one data packet had the same respective destination address as the given data packet.

17. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 16, wherein determining the amount by which to increment the count comprises incrementing the count only if none of the data packets received previously, responsively to which the count was incremented, had at least one of the same respective source address and the same respective destination address as the given data packet.

18. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein detecting the deviation comprises detecting a type of the communication traffic that appears to be of the malicious origin, and wherein filtering the communication traffic comprises intercepting the communication traffic of the detected type.

19. (Original) The method according to claim 18, wherein detecting the type comprises determining at least one of a communication protocol and a port that is characteristic of the communication traffic.

20. (Original) The method according to claim 18, wherein detecting the type comprises determining one or more source addresses of the communication traffic that appears to be of the malicious origin, and intercepting the communication traffic sent from the one or more source addresses.

21. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein detecting the deviation comprises detecting a type of the communication traffic that appears to be of the malicious origin, and wherein monitoring the communication traffic comprises collecting specific information relating to the traffic of the detected type.

22. (Original) The method according to claim 21, wherein collecting the specific information comprises determining one or more source addresses of the traffic of the detected type.

23. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein monitoring and filtering the communication traffic comprise monitoring and filtering the communication traffic that is transmitted into a protected area of the network containing the group of the addresses so as to exclude the communication traffic from the area.

24. (Original) The method according to claim 23, and comprising monitoring the communication traffic that is

transmitted by computers in the protected area so as to detect an infection of one or more of the computers by a malicious program.

25-28. (Canceled)

29. (Previously presented) A method for processing communication traffic, comprising:

monitoring the communication traffic on a network so as to detect packets that are indicative of a communication failure in the network that is characteristic of a worm infection;

detecting an increase in a rate of arrival of the packets that are indicative of the communication failure; and

responsively to the increase, filtering the communication traffic so as to remove at least a portion of the communication traffic that is generated by the worm infection.

30. (Original) The method according to claim 29, wherein monitoring the communication traffic comprises detecting Internet Control Message Protocol (ICMP) unreachable packets.

31. (Original) The method according to claim 29, wherein monitoring the communication traffic comprises detecting failures to establish a Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) connection.

32. (Previously presented) A method for processing communication traffic, comprising:

monitoring the communication traffic on a network so as to detect ill-formed packets;

making a determination, responsively to the ill-formed packets, that at least a portion of the communication traffic has been generated by a worm infection; and

responsively to the determination, filtering the communication traffic so as to remove at least the

portion of the communication traffic that is generated by the worm infection.

33. (Original) The method according to claim 32, wherein the packets comprise a header specifying a communication protocol, and wherein monitoring the communication traffic comprises determining that the packets contain data that are incompatible with the specified communication protocol.

34. (Original) The method according to claim 32, wherein the packets comprise a header specifying a packet length, and wherein monitoring the communication traffic comprises determining that the packets contain an amount of data that is incompatible with the specified packet length.

35. (Previously presented) Apparatus for processing communication traffic that is directed to a group of addresses on a network, comprising a guard device, which is adapted to identify a selected subset of the group of the addresses such that the addresses in the subset are expected to receive smaller amounts of the communication traffic than other addresses in the group, to monitor the communication traffic that is directed to the addresses in the subset, to determine respective baseline characteristics of the communication traffic that is directed to each of the addresses in the subset, to detect a deviation from the respective baseline characteristics of the communication traffic directed to at least one of the addresses in the subset, wherein the deviation is indicative that at least a portion of the communication traffic is of potentially malicious origin, and responsively to detecting the deviation, to filter the communication traffic that is directed to all of the addresses in the group so as to remove at least some of the communication traffic that is of the malicious origin.

36-37. (Canceled)

38. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the baseline characteristics comprise a distribution of communication protocols used in generating the communication traffic.

39. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the baseline characteristics comprise a distribution of ports to which the communication traffic is directed.

40. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the baseline characteristics comprise a distribution of source addresses of the communication traffic.

41. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the baseline characteristics comprise a distribution of sizes of data packets sent to the addresses in the group.

42. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the baseline characteristics are indicative of a distribution of operating systems running on computers that have transmitted the communication traffic.

43. (Previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 42, wherein the guard device is adapted to read a Time-To-Live (TTL) field in Internet Protocol headers of data packets sent to the addresses in the group, and to detect a change in values of the TTL field relative to the baseline characteristics due to the distribution of the operating systems.

44. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the guard device is adapted to detect events that are indicative of a failure in communication between a first computer at one of the addresses in the group and a second computer at another location in the network.

45. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 44, wherein the events comprise failures to establish a Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) connection.

46. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the guard device is adapted to receive packets that are indicative of a communication failure in the network that is characteristic of a worm infection, and to decide to filter the communication traffic responsively to receiving the packets.

47. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 46, wherein the packets comprises Internet Control Message Protocol (ICMP) unreachable packets.

48. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the guard device is adapted to make a determination that one or more packets transmitted over the network are ill-formed, and to decide to filter the communication traffic responsively to the ill-formed packets.

49. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the guard device is adapted to increment a count of events that are indicative of the malicious origin of the communication traffic, and to decide whether to filter the communication traffic responsively to the count.

50. (Previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 49, wherein the guard device is coupled to receive data packets of potentially malicious origin, each data packet having a respective source address and destination address, and is adapted to determine an amount by which to increment the count responsively to a given data packet depending upon whether among the data packets received previously, responsively to which the count was incremented, at least one data packet had the same respective source address and at least one data packet

had the same respective destination address as the given data packet.

51. (Previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 40, wherein the guard device is adapted to increment the count only if none of the data packets received previously, responsively to which the count was incremented, had at least one of the same respective source address and the same respective destination address as the given data packet.

52. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the guard device is adapted to detect a type of the communication traffic that appears to be of the malicious origin, and to filter the communication traffic by intercepting the communication traffic of the detected type.

53. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 52, wherein the type of the communication traffic that appears to be of the malicious origin is characterized by at least one of a communication protocol and a port.

54. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 52, wherein the guard device is adapted to determine one or more source addresses of the communication traffic that appears to be of the malicious origin, and to intercept the communication traffic sent from the one or more source addresses.

55. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the guard device is adapted to detect a type of the communication traffic that appears to be of the malicious origin, and to monitor the communication traffic so as to collect specific information relating to the traffic of the detected type.

56. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 55, wherein the specific information comprises one or more source addresses of the traffic of the detected type.

57. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the guard device is adapted to monitor and filter the communication traffic that is transmitted into a protected area of the network containing the group of the addresses so as to exclude the communication traffic from the area.

58. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 57, wherein the guard device is adapted to monitor the communication traffic that is transmitted by computers in the protected area so as to detect an infection of one or more of the computers by a malicious program.

59-62. (Canceled)

63. (Previously presented) Apparatus for processing communication traffic, comprising a guard device, which is adapted to monitor the communication traffic on a network so as to detect packets that are indicative of a communication failure in the network that is characteristic of a worm infection, to detect an increase in a rate of arrival of the packets that are indicative of the communication failure, and responsively to the increase, to filter the communication traffic so as to remove at least a portion of the communication traffic that is generated by the worm infection.

64. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 63, wherein the guard device is adapted to detect Internet Control Message Protocol (ICMP) unreachable packets as an indication of the communication failure.

65. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 63, wherein the guard device is adapted to detect failures to establish a Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) connection.

66. (Previously presented) Apparatus for processing communication traffic, comprising a guard device, which is adapted to monitor the communication traffic on a

network so as to detect ill-formed packets, to make a determination, responsively to the ill-formed packets, that at least a portion of the communication traffic has been generated by a worm infection, and responsively to the determination, to filter the communication traffic so as to remove at least the portion of the communication traffic that is generated by the worm infection.

67. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 66, wherein the packets comprise a header specifying a communication protocol, and wherein the guard device is adapted to detect that the packets contain data that are incompatible with the specified communication protocol.

68. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 66, wherein the packets comprise a header specifying a packet length, and wherein the guard device is adapted to detect that the packets contain an amount of data that is incompatible with the specified packet length.

69. (Previously presented) A computer software product for processing communication traffic that is directed to a group of addresses on a network, comprising a computer-readable medium in which program instructions are stored, which instructions, when read by a computer, cause the computer to identify a selected subset of the group of the addresses such that the addresses in the subset are expected to receive smaller amounts of the communication traffic than other addresses in the group, to monitor the communication traffic that is directed to the addresses in the subset, to determine respective baseline characteristics of the communication traffic that is directed to each of the addresses in the subset, to detect a deviation from the respective baseline characteristics of the communication traffic directed to at least one of the addresses in the subset, wherein the deviation is indicative that at least a portion of the communication traffic is of potentially malicious origin,

and responsively to detecting the deviation, to filter the communication traffic that is directed to all of the addresses in the group so as to remove at least some of the communication traffic that is of the malicious origin.

70-71. (Canceled)

72. (Original) The product according to claim 69, wherein the baseline characteristics comprise a distribution of communication protocols used in generating the communication traffic.

73. (Original) The product according to claim 69, wherein the baseline characteristics comprise a distribution of ports to which the communication traffic is directed.

74. (Original) The product according to claim 69, wherein the baseline characteristics comprise a distribution of source addresses of the communication traffic.

75. (Original) The product according to claim 69, wherein the baseline characteristics comprise a distribution of sizes of data packets sent to the addresses in the group.

76. (Original) The product according to claim 69, wherein the baseline characteristics are indicative of a distribution of operating systems running on computers that have transmitted the communication traffic.

77. (Previously presented) The product according to claim 76, wherein instructions cause the computer to read a Time-To-Live (TTL) field in Internet Protocol headers of data packets sent to the addresses in the group, and to detect a change in values of the TTL field relative to the baseline characteristics due to the distribution of the operating systems.

78. (Original) The product according to claim 69, wherein the instructions cause the computer to detect events that are indicative of a failure in communication between a first computer at one of the addresses in the group and a second computer at another location in the network.

79. (Original) The product according to claim 78, wherein the events comprise failures to establish a Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) connection.

80. (Original) The product according to claim 69, wherein the instructions cause the computer to receive packets that are indicative of a communication failure in the network that is characteristic of a worm infection, and to decide to filter the communication traffic responsively to receiving the packets.

81. (Original) The product according to claim 80, wherein the packets comprises Internet Control Message Protocol (ICMP) unreachable packets.

82. (Original) The product according to claim 69, wherein the instructions cause the computer to make a determination that one or more packets transmitted over the network are ill-formed, and to decide to filter the communication traffic responsively to the ill-formed packets.

83. (Original) The product according to claim 69, wherein the instructions cause the computer to increment a count of events that are indicative of the malicious origin of the communication traffic, and to decide whether to filter the communication traffic responsively to the count.

84. (Previously presented) The product according to claim 83, wherein when the computer is coupled to receive data packets of potentially malicious origin, each data packet having a respective source address and destination

address, the instructions cause the computer to determine an amount by which to increment the count responsively to a given data packet depending upon whether among the data packets received previously, responsively to which the count was incremented, at least one data packet had the same respective source address and at least one data packet had the same respective destination address as the given data packet.

85. (Previously presented) The product according to claim 84, wherein the instructions cause the computer to increment the count only if none of the data packets received previously, responsively to which the count was incremented, had at least one of the same respective source address and the same respective destination address as the given data packet.

86. (Original) The product according to claim 69, wherein the instructions cause the computer to detect a type of the communication traffic that appears to be of the malicious origin, and to filter the communication traffic by intercepting the communication traffic of the detected type.

87. (Original) The product according to claim 86, wherein the type of the communication traffic that appears to be of the malicious origin is characterized by at least one of a communication protocol and a port.

88. (Original) The product according to claim 86, wherein the instructions cause the computer to determine one or more source addresses of the communication traffic that appears to be of the malicious origin, and to intercept the communication traffic sent from the one or more source addresses.

89. (Original) The product according to claim 69, wherein the instructions cause the computer to detect a type of the communication traffic that appears to be of the malicious origin, and to monitor the communication

traffic so as to collect specific information relating to the traffic of the detected type.

90. (Original) The product according to claim 89, wherein the specific information comprises one or more source addresses of the traffic of the detected type.

91. (Original) The product according to claim 69, wherein the instructions cause the computer to monitor and filter the communication traffic that is transmitted into a protected area of the network containing the group of the addresses so as to exclude the communication traffic from the area.

92. (Original) The product according to claim 91, wherein the instructions cause the computer to monitor the communication traffic that is transmitted by computers in the protected area so as to detect an infection of one or more of the computers by a malicious program.

93. (Canceled)

97. (Previously presented) A computer software product, comprising a computer-readable medium in which program instructions are stored, which instructions, when read by a computer, cause the computer to monitor the communication traffic on a network so as to detect packets that are indicative of a communication failure in the network that is characteristic of a worm infection, to detect an increase in a rate of arrival of the packets that are indicative of the communication failure, and responsively to the increase, to filter the communication traffic so as to remove at least a portion of the communication traffic that is generated by the worm infection.

98. (Original) The product according to claim 97, wherein the instructions cause the computer to detect

Internet Control Message Protocol (ICMP) unreachable packets as an indication of the communication failure.

99. (Original) The product according to claim 97, wherein the instructions cause the computer to detect failures to establish a Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) connection.

100. (Previously presented) A computer software product, comprising a computer-readable medium in which program instructions are stored, which instructions, when read by a computer, cause the computer to monitor the communication traffic on a network so as to detect ill-formed packets, to make a determination, responsively to the ill-formed packets, that at least a portion of the communication traffic has been generated by a worm infection, and responsively to the determination, to filter the communication traffic so as to remove at least the portion of the communication traffic that is generated by the worm infection.

101. (Original) The product according to claim 100, wherein the packets comprise a header specifying a communication protocol, and wherein the instructions cause the computer to detect that the packets contain data that are incompatible with the specified communication protocol.

102. (Original) The product according to claim 100, wherein the packets comprise a header specifying a packet length, and wherein the instructions cause the computer to detect that the packets contain an amount of data that is incompatible with the specified packet length.

103. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein identifying the subset comprises selecting clients for inclusion in the subset while excluding servers.

104. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein identifying the subset comprises selecting trap addresses that are not used by actual computers for inclusion in the subset.

105. (Previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the subset includes clients while excluding servers.

106. (Previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the subset includes trap addresses that are not used by actual computers.

107. (Previously presented) The product according to claim 69, wherein the subset includes clients while excluding servers.

108. (Previously presented) The product according to claim 69, wherein the subset includes trap addresses that are not used by actual computers.